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DRAM 361.01: Theatre Sound I

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Drama/Dance 361

Instructor	Malcolm Lowe	Phone	406-549-3623 or 406-880-6414
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Office Hours	9:30 – 11:00 M/W or by appointment	Sound Lab Assistant	Dan Hartman 240-3649

Required Texts:

The Sound Reinforcement Handbook by Gary Davis and Ralph Jones. Hal Leonard Publishing 1989.
Sound and Music for the Theatre 2nd ed. By Deena Kaye and James LeBrecht. Focal Press, 2000.
“The Sand Storm: Stories From the Iraqi Front” by Sean Huze – Copy/PDF file
“The Voice of the Prairie” by John Olive. Samuel French 1989 or approved script

Description:

This course will prepare students in the fundamentals of analysis, design and operation of all aspects of sound in a live theater production.

Goals:

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the creative process as it applies to theater sound. Students will be challenged to cultivate an aural awareness of their environment and to analyze sound for its emotional impact. Class discussions and daily exercises will focus on listening observations and how these ideas apply to the stage.

Students will learn to analyze a script for audio needs, create a sound plot, diagram systems, and utilize audio equipment to deliver sound to the stage.

The technique of a sound design artist is rooted in their knowledge of audio equipment and their facility with it. Projects and the text will focus on developing a technical understanding of the equipment required to effectively make audio ideas part of a theater production. Assignments and lectures will cover the general function of each type of equipment, diagrams, troubleshooting, acoustics, and technical problem solving.

Projects and Requirements:

Project 1 – Sandstorm: Choose “theme” music for assigned characters. Plot sound effects and transitional cues in and out of assigned segments. Bring three options of recorded music for each character theme. Be prepared to discuss entire work. Due Sept 14. 50 points.

Project 2 – Record 5 minutes of a talk show, televangelist, or news report and cut and paste it to say something different. Project should be done using reel to reel tape and manual splicing techniques. Final length should be 1 to 2 minutes. Original and spliced tape will be played in class. Due Oct 10. 75 points.

Project 3 – “Voice of the Prairie” sound plot and diagram. Part 1: Analyze script for style and musical content, establish cue plot with at least 5 specific music selections notated, recorded to CD and turned in with plot. Part 2: Diagram of sound system including console routing, microphone placement, processors, amps, and speakers. Part one due Oct 3. Part 2 due Nov 16. Each part 75 points.

Project 4 – Create complete sound scene including scripted dialog, overlapping EFX, environmental factors and emotional content using Pro tools. Eg: A conversation in a bar, Osama bin Laden's jail cell, The Mad Hatters bedtime. Scenes should be discussed and approved by instructor before students begin work. Final length should be 60 to 120 seconds. Due at final exam. 150 points

Critiques -- Critiques should contain 300-500 words. They should discuss the role of sound in the production, including analysis of how sound served the overall concept, technical challenges, designer vs. operator influence, specific examples should be given to support arguments as to the overall effectiveness of the design. No discussion of plot, character, or actors' performances should be included. Each critique is worth 30 points.

Examination #1 – This test will cover material presented in the text and in class. It will focus primarily on terms and definitions.

Examination #2 – This test will cover terms, definitions, equipment functions, processes, and concepts presented throughout the term.

Weekly listening assignments – each week an audio journal, environmental recording, or musical selection exercise will be given. These will be due Monday of each week. Each entry is worth 15 points.

Attendance/Daily reading – Students will be expected to come to every class. They are expected to have read assigned texts and participate in discussions. Each day participating is 10 points.

Cell phones – If a student's cell phone rings in class they will be docked 5 attendance points; If they answer it they will be asked to remove themselves from the class and will receive no points for attendance.

Writing ability – All written assignments will be graded on correct use of academic English as well as content.

Late projects/papers – Assignments turned in late will lose 5% of their point value for each class day missed. No projects or papers will be accepted after the day of the final.

Extra Credit – Extra credit is encouraged by the professor. Student must receive the instructor's approval before starting a project that is to be used for extra credit.

Grades will be A to F derived from percentages of total points.

Grading	Points	Percent	Grade
Attendance	290	90-100%	A
Listening journals	195	80-89%	B
3 Critiques@30 ea	90	70-79%	C
Examination #1	100	60-69%	D
Examination #2	100	59% and below	F
Project #1	50		
Project #2	75		
Project #3 2@75	150		
<u>Project #5</u>	<u>150</u>		
Total Points	1200		

Drama/Dance 361 Class Schedule

	Lecture/Discussion Topic	Read for Class	Due
Aug 29	Introductions, Syllabus, Sandstorm project		
Aug 31	Hartman: Booths, Policies, Equipment, Pro Tools intro	S&M 1-36 (copy)	
Sept 5	(Labor Day – No class)		
Sept 7	Mixing Board and patch bay	Handout/SRH 149-157	
Sept 12	Sandstorm listening and discussion. Sound plots	S&M 37-66	Project #1 Sandstorm
Sept 14	Recording Devices, Tape Decks, Project #2	Handout	
Sept 19	Hartman: Pro Tools	Handout	
Sept 21	Intro to Processors: Reverb, Pitch, Delay, EQ	SRH 243-253, 259-261, 267-268, 271-276	
Sept 26	Gain structure, Signal path, Consoles	SRH 158-166/172-177, 313-324	
Sept 28	Intro to reinforcement. Bat Boy tour,	SRH 178-191	
Oct 3	Tape Decks review Pro Tools Lab		Project 3 part 1 1 st Plot Prairie
Oct 5	Cue Plots, Diagrams,	S&M 67-74/117-155 SRH 319-323	
Oct 10	Listen to Projects		Project #2 Tape edit
Oct 12	Review	S&M 89-108	
Oct 17	Exam #1/		
Oct 19	Communication and Concepts	S & M 179-205	Critique of “Bat Boy”
Oct 24	Building cues/FX sources	S&M 157-177	
Oct 26	Collaboration and Rehearsals	S&M 75-88,109-116	
Oct 31	Field Recording	Handout	
Nov 2	Signal path and their diagrams	SRH 61-70	
Nov 7	Microphones	SRH 113-128, 139-148	
Nov 9	Cables	SRH 281-302, 355-357	Critique of “Proof”
Nov 14	Amps and speakers	SRH 204-241,	
Nov 16	Listen to Projects		Project 3 part 2 Cue/Diagram Prairie
Nov 21	Diagnostics, Grounding, and Troubleshooting	SRH 303-304, 327-345 Handout	
Nov 28	Feedback, Grounding, and Physics	SRH 347-370, Handout	
Nov 30	Review		
Dec 5	Examination #2		
Dec 7	Role of the Sound Designer	S&M 207-258	
Dec 12	Listen to Projects 8:00 – 10:00		Project #4, Critique of “Peter Pan”

Production Dates

U.M.

<u>It just catches</u>	Sept 9-10
<u>Bat Boy</u>	Oct 4-8/11-15
<u>Proof</u>	Oct 25-29/Nov 1-5
Dance Showcase	Nov 15-19
<u>Peter Pan</u>	Nov 25-26, 29/Dec 3,6-10

<u>Trip to the Bountiful</u>	Jan 24-28
<u>Dancing at Lughnasa</u>	Feb 28-Mar 4, 7-11
Dance Showcase	Mar 21-25
<u>The Debutante Ball</u>	Mar 21-25/Ap 4-7
<u>The Time of Your Life</u>	Ap 25-29, May 2-6
Dance Concert	May 3-6

MCT

<u>Paint Your Wagon</u>	Nov 3-6/9-13
<u>Inspecting Carol</u>	Dec 1-4/7-11
<u>The Wiz</u>	Jan 19-22/25-29
<u>The Boys Next Door</u>	Mar 16-19/22-26
<u>My Fair Lady</u>	May 4-7/10-14